I: Huntingford E-4, 5 (1938-1939) 1953 FL6 Dorobo FL6



A striking difference between the Dorobo and Nandi systems is that whereas Nandi may not marry any person in the *iliet*, the Dorobo were insistent that a man might marry his father's sister's daughter, the girl whom he calls *marokov*, a person definitely in the *iliet*. This type of marriage does not seem to occur now, but did in the past. Marriage with a wife's sister is considered objectionable.

Behaviour patterns may be summed up in a statement made by a Dorobo that "a man does not use bad language to his father, though his father may beat him as a child, nor does he use bad language to his father's brother; he does not speak of dirty things, nor of sexual matters, to his mother and his mother's sister, for it is bad to do so; but we are all on terms of friendliness and 'clean fun.'" Generally speaking, seniority is a matter of age, except with respect to the father's brother. Between a man and members of his own generation considerable latitude is allowed; but elders must always be shown respect. Where the claims of relatives are concerned, the amount of contact is important, for even a close relative who lives a long way off and is seldom seen cannot expect and will not receive so much respect as one who lives nearby and is well known. On a husband's part, there should be complete avoidance of his wife's mother, though this may be relaxed by degrees as he gets older; conversation with the wife's father should be limited to greetings.

*Pre-marital Sex-life*

Owing to the small number of Dorobo and the consequent shortage of women for wives, men have little in the way of pre-marital sex-life; and if a man does manage to acquire a lover, he often marries her.

*Bridewealth*

This varies according to circumstances, and Dorobo statements about it are conflicting. In 1927 it was said to consist of large quantities of honey-wine and of monkey-skin caps; but in 1930 the standard was one cow (with calf if still suckling), one ox, and four goats. The number of goats varied in the recorded cases from two to six, and in one case the cattle amounted to four oxen. A man also gives his father-in-law presents of honey-wine and a fur cap or two; thus marriage is more of a drain on a man's resources than formerly.

*Betrothal*

A man chooses his wife himself, and arranges the preliminaries with the girl's father during two visits at which he gives him presents of honey. After the second visit the father calls the clan council together and publicly gives his consent to the marriage.

*Marriage*

The marriage ceremonies are conducted by an elder known for the time as *patoon*, who brings the bride to her future husband's house, where the guests are already assembled feasting. The girl enters the hut in which the ceremony is to take place, and in the presence of witnesses the *patoon* gives her to the man, saying, *Kaipaanin ciondo*, "you now belong to this man." He then binds some ochalaid grass on the man's right wrist, and an old woman binds some of the same on the girl's right wrist. They are now married. The *patoon* then sets up an erection of ochalaid grass called *tumdo* which is smeared over with cow-dung; this the wife has to knock down and tread upon. After this, the pair are left alone, and the marriage is consummated. Next day the *tumdo* is trodden into the floor and plastered over with cow-dung, for it must not be seen. The pair are then shaved, he by the *patoon*, she by the old woman, and the hair is buried in cow-dung under an erection of sticks called *kowaiet*, which is set up in great secrecy by the *patoon*. It is essential

3:Huntingford E-5 (1921-1928)1929 FL6 Dorobo FL6



When a man is ill and dies, it is said that bad silk (*siik che gook*, N.) have killed him; if he recovers, a good oloiket has saved him. No offerings are made to the bad silk.

There is also a vague belief in a future life. A man's spirit is said to go at death to the *kwet ap siik* (N.), or land of the spirits, which is under the earth, and is a bad place.

### *Magic.*

There are magicians (*pendindet*, pl. *pendi*, N.) who are bad, and who prevent people from getting food by means of their spells. There are also diviners (*orbsigat*, pl. *orbsiik*, N.).[1] There is no equivalent of the modern Nandi system of "orbomotet" or rule by a medicine-man.

### *Medicines and Charms.*

(a) *Medicines.*—For snake-bite, the gum of the tinet tree is used, mixed with the honey of a species of bee, called "kosomyot" (N.), and man's fat. This concoction is rubbed on the affected part, and a little is also eaten. For coughs, a plant called "epeito" is chewed; this is used for all chest complaints.

(b) *Charms.*—Children wear a charm to ward off the evil-eye (*sakut*, N.), which is similar to that worn by Nandi children. It consists of a necklace of seeds of the kapuywet tree (N. *kapuswiti*) strung on a cord, the seeds being separated by short pieces of bamboo (Text-fig. 20). Old men wear a charm to keep away circumcision (*kimokwopet*, or *kowoito* (kowoito), N.); it is made of two small pieces of the olemalet tree,[2] about 1 in. long, which are tied to the belt (Text-fig. 19).

## V.—Social Institutions.

### *Social Divisions.*

The male sex is divided into boys (*kipsiik*, N.), warriors (*moruasiik*, N.), and old men (*poiyiniik*, or *apoiyiniik*, N.); the female sex, into girls (*chipsiik*, N.) and women (*korosiik*, or *chepiyiniik*, N.). At circumcision, a boy becomes a warrior and a girl a woman.

Married and unmarried people sleep separately. Married people and small children may sleep in the same hut, while unmarried men sleep elsewhere, often in the *sigiriniot* (N.), or "warriors' hut," where they cohabit with the unmarried girls. Though free-love is practised, it is not carried to such an extent as among the Nandi, and although girls sleep with warriors, they like to preserve their virginity till circumcision. Warriors frequently marry their sweethearts (*moroniot*, N. *moronet*), whereas in Nandi they usually marry someone else.

The position of women in the scale as it is among the Nandi, that is, they wait on the men, do all the menial work, and are their husband's property.

[1] This word is not used with the same sense in Nandi; originally it seems to have meant simply "medicine-man" (Swahili, *mganga*).

[2] *Euphorbia candelabrum.*

4:Huntingford E-5 (1938-1939) 195: FL6 Dorobo FL6



881 them complete adult members of the horde, and no male could get a wife if he was uncircumcised; but it is possible for an uninitiated girl to get married, though few in fact are married without being circumcised.

### 2. Pre-marital sex-life

834 Having attained manhood through circumcision, the Dorobo is free,
835 subject to the restrictions inevitably imposed by a small population, to enter into legitimate sex-life. But unmarried men often have to go without a great deal of sexual experience before they marry, and some in fact never 884 marry at all because of the shortage of women. Even in the old days few girls were available, and there were only married women with whom they could not consort unless prepared to be shot by injured husbands if found out. This state of affairs has led to some men living alone and unmarried, 889 helped in their household tasks by women of the settlement. Some even did everything for themselves. The shortage of women, and the shyness of the Dorobo has resulted in a definite habit sufficiently in evidence to justify the application of a special term, for which I suggest the word moralists. And it is to be noted that the Dorobo have accepted the condition of moralists as something quite natural, whereas by many other peoples the unmarried state in a grown man is considered unnatural.

836 Young Dorobo to whom life without love does not appeal therefore wander about a good deal, going to places where they know there are girls, or women with whom they can have surreptitious affairs, such women often 837 being the wives of age-mates, for although this is not openly allowed, a woman will sometimes, when her husband is away, oblige one of his age-mates and say nothing about it. In favourable circumstances, however, where there are girls available, unmarried circumcised men build small huts called *ekirorori* close to their fathers' huts, where they may sleep with uncircumcised girls, each man choosing a girl to associate with her till she is married. A Dorobo, unlike the Nandi, often marries his premarital 824 lover. Uncircumcised boys caught by the men playing with girls who are sexually mature are beaten, for love affairs are the privilege of manhood.

### 3. Marriage

838 Dorobo generally marry women of an age fairly near their own, and do not by preference marry women very much younger than themselves.
884 A man chooses his wife for himself, and himself makes the preliminary arrangements. After making his choice, he takes the first step, by "going the journey" (*amak ilole*), to the hut of the girl's parents, or if they are dead, of a responsible relative, and hands over a large bag of honey, saying, "I want your daughter", to which the father answers, "Very well, take her presently". This ready acquiescence is due to the fact that the father already knows what is going on, for the suitor has been making enquiries about the girl, and such things always reach the ears of those concerned. Later

[P 191, A]

Apart from the rule of exogamy, there are certain other marriage regulations:

1. A person may not marry anyone who comes into the *siket* or *isiinwonkip* (except F. Sis. D. D.), that is, anyone addressed by a relationship term, or *as anyone.*
2. A man may not marry his wife's sister because such unions are thought to be sterile.
3. A person may marry into the clan of his or her M., M.M., Br.W., or Sis.H.

Pre-marital intercourse with anyone in the *siket* is forbidden; but with a clansfellow condoned, though not approved of.

The shortage of women and the lack of wealth have resulted in the Dorobo being largely monogamous, though if a man has the wealth, he may have more than one wife. The *kukuo* (bride-price)[1] is said to have been formerly 4 cows for slaughtering; today it is 1 cow, 1 ox and 4 goats, which go to the bride's father and become his personal property. This *kukuo* is high for people who own little or no stock; but by means of gift exchange cattle can be obtained from the Nandi (See below, p. 192.) Rarity of divorce is another result of this shortage, and since a wife is something comparatively hard to come by, she is more cherished than is usual among other peoples where women are plentiful. The inability to get wives has produced a tendency to what may be called *monkhi*, that is, unmarried men (some of whom never marry) live entirely alone, and do all their domestic work, as well as hunting and cultivation, without assistance.

## III

## ECONOMIC LIFE.

### *A. Environment.*

The home of the Kapchepkendi Dorobo is the western end of the high ground which occupies the country between Eldama Ravine and the Nandi escarpment. The greater part of it is covered with dense forest, and is crossed on the S. W. corner by two parallel paths from Kipkoreon in the north to Ndarotua in the south. The forest begins about the 8,000 ft. contour, and to reach it from any side entails a steep climb of

[1] On this term, see "Bride-price in antiquity," *M.AN.*, 1935, 187.

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Dorobo PLS
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/339 cont./

IV.

000 Marital relations. -- Polygyny. -- Betrothal. -- State of being betrothed. -- Conversion of the young man to the state of the married. -- Bride price. -- Forcing the consent of the father of the bride. -- Exchange of wives. -- Obstacles to marriage. -- Entering into marriage. -- Dissolution of the marriage.

595 The marital relations also offer little that is new. Polygyny exists only to a limited extent; most of the people are too poor to acquire and support more than one wife; only a few have two wives, and if a man has three of them it is a rarity. Betrothal in earliest childhood seems to be more frequent here than among the Ideal, but no more binding and without legal consequences. As a rule after circumcision the youth is betrothed to a girl eight to ten years old, after his father has proposed for him to her parents. As among the Ideal, the /[illegible]/ betrothed persons live apart and may not cross one another. The bridegroom lives with a girl in the one camp, and in the other, the bride with another youth. If the bride becomes pregnant before the wedding, dissolution of the betrothal does not always take place, as among the Ideal, but rather the one who made her pregnant must reimburse the bridegroom by the payment of a head of cattle.

Here, just as among the Ideal, the young men of an age class together decide upon their entering the standing of the married, and their fellow companions confirm this intention by a feast corresponding to the ol gorok i ol ik, to which friends and neighbors participate. They are served game and honey beer, the latter of which, however, the marriage candidates may not yet drink. They like to eat the game for the day after a successful elephant hunt, so that the guests can feast heartily on meat.

583 Before marriage can be entered into, the bride price is to be paid. The bridegroom usually gives the father of the bride, even before her circumcision, five pots of honey and five bedcovers, and, soon after her circumcision, half of a male female elephant with the calf that belongs to it; furthermore, two head of cattle, which